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GERMAN ARMY HIGH COMMAND

THE ARMY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

by

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OSTERKAMP joined the army as an officer candidate in 1913 and was promoted 2d lieutenant a year later after normal training in an officer candidate school. Throughout World War I he served on the West Front, where he finally commanded an artillery battalion.

Remaining in the reduced German army after World War I, he served in various assignments in the field forces until 1927 with only brief interruptions for General Staff Training and then was transferred to headquarters at Berlin for duty in the administrative services. In 1935 he was awarded General Staff Corps status.

Upon the outbreak of war in 1939, by which time he had reached the rank of colonel, OSTERKAMP was appointed chief of the Army Administration Office, which assignment he held until 1944. While serving this assignment he was promoted Generalmajor in 1939, Generalleutnant in 1941 and General der Artillerie in 1943. In 1944 he was placed in command of Deputy Corps Headquarters XII*, which controlled the Wiesbaden military area. He remained in this assignment until the end of the war.

* At the outbreak of war, the regular corps headquarters took to the field. Its place was taken by a deputy corps headquarters. (Stellvertretendes Generalkommando).

CONTENTS

			Page
THE ARMY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE			1
CHAPTER 1.	MISSION AND ORGANIZATION		1
Section	I.	Background	1
	II.	Mission of the Army Administration Office.	2
	III.	Organization	3
		1. At the Outbreak of War	3
		2. Changes During the War	7
	IV.	Comments on the Organization as it Existed in late 1944	9
CHAPTER 2.	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ARMY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE		10
Section	I.	Background	10
	II.	The Procurement of Administrative Personnel	11
		1. Responsible Group	11
		2. Organization and Operating Procedures	12
	III.	Finances	19
		1. Responsible Group	19
		2. Operating Procedures	20
		3. Comments	22
	IV.	Administration of Quarters, Real Estate, Agricultural and Forest Lands	23
		1. Responsible Group	23
		2. Organization and Operating Procedures	23
		3. Comments	27

Page

Section V. Rations 27

1. Responsible Group 27

2. Organization and Operating Procedures 28

3. Branch V-III-A 33

4. Branch V-III-B 37

5. Comments 40

VI. Building Construction and Maintenance 40

1. Responsible Group 40

2. Organization and Operating Procedures 40

3. Comments 43

VII. Textiles, Leather, Personal Equipment (Excluding Weapons) 43

1. Responsible Branch 43

2. Organization and Operating Procedures 43

3. Comments 48

ILLUSTRATIONS

Chart 1 4

Chart 2 6

Chart 3 9

Chart 4 13

Chart 5 26

Chart 6 31

Chart 7 34

Chart 8 35

Page

Chart 9 41

Chart 10 44

Chart 11 51

THE ARMY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

CHAPTER 1

MISSION AND ORGANIZATION

I. BACKGROUND

Prior to World War II, the Army Administration Office was responsible to the Commander in Chief of the Army but when the war broke out it was placed under the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army. This officer, to an ever-increasing extent, assumed the Zone of Interior responsibilities of the Commander in Chief while the latter was with the Field Army. The Office maintained no direct contact with the Field Army, the administrative affairs of which were handled by the Chief Army Administrative Official, a civilian who was subordinate to the Chief Supply and Administration Officer.

In the table of organization for the Army High Command (Special Annex 2 to the Army Mobilization Plan of 1 March 1939) the basic directive of the Army Administration Office provided that the chief of the Army Administration Office was at the same time to be the chief of Wehrmacht administration at the Wehrmacht High Command. This intention was dropped and while the author was chief of the Office, up to 1944, the position of a chief of Wehrmacht administration did not exist. Why the position was not established is unknown to the author, since he was transferred to the Army Administration Office only during the course of the war. However, a separate Wehrmacht Administration Branch existed at the Wehrmacht High Command and was directly responsible to the Chief of the Wehrmacht High Command.

II. MISSION OF THE ARMY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

As part of the mission of the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army, the Army Administration Office in its various subdivisions handled finances and accounting; the affairs of Army officials* and other civilian employees; billets in garrisons and at training grounds; rations (including feed for animals) and post exchange supplies; material for clothing and equipment (excluding weapons); building activities and building materials.

For the Field Army it maintained a reserve pool of officials (excluding chaplains, pharmacists and officials of the Judge Advocate Branch); handled rations in accordance with directives issued by the Commander in Chief of the Army through the Chief Supply and Administration Officer; procured and administered funds and supervised transactions between disbursing agencies of the Field Army and the finance and auditing agencies in the Zone of Interior. On certain specialized fields that branch of the Wehrmacht which was primarily concerned was responsible for Wehrmacht interests.**

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* The term "official" here implies a person entitled to the rights and privileges of a permanent civil servant.

** If all three branches of the Wehrmacht concurred, responsibility for the handling of a matter was assigned to the Army Administration Office. If no agreement could be reached, the matter was handled by the General Wehrmacht Office in consultation with the branches of the Wehrmacht. In this case the chief of the General Wehrmacht Office was required to obtain the approval of the chief of the Wehrmacht High Command, who, since no chief of Wehrmacht administration had been appointed, decided all matters of vital importance personally. All business between the Army Administration Office and the Wehrmacht High Command was transacted through the office of the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army.

III. ORGANIZATION

1. At the Outbreak of War (chart 1, page 4). In 1939 the Office was organized as follows:

Executive Staff (Chief of the Army Administration Office, one special staff officer, one adjutant).

Group V-I (Group for army officials, other civilian employees, financial officers). This group controlled:

Branch V-1 (army administrative officials and finances);

Branch Anga(other civilian employees).

Branch V-2 (administration of quarters and troop training grounds).

Group V-III (army rations and procurement matters) which controlled:

Branch V-3 (Rations Branch);

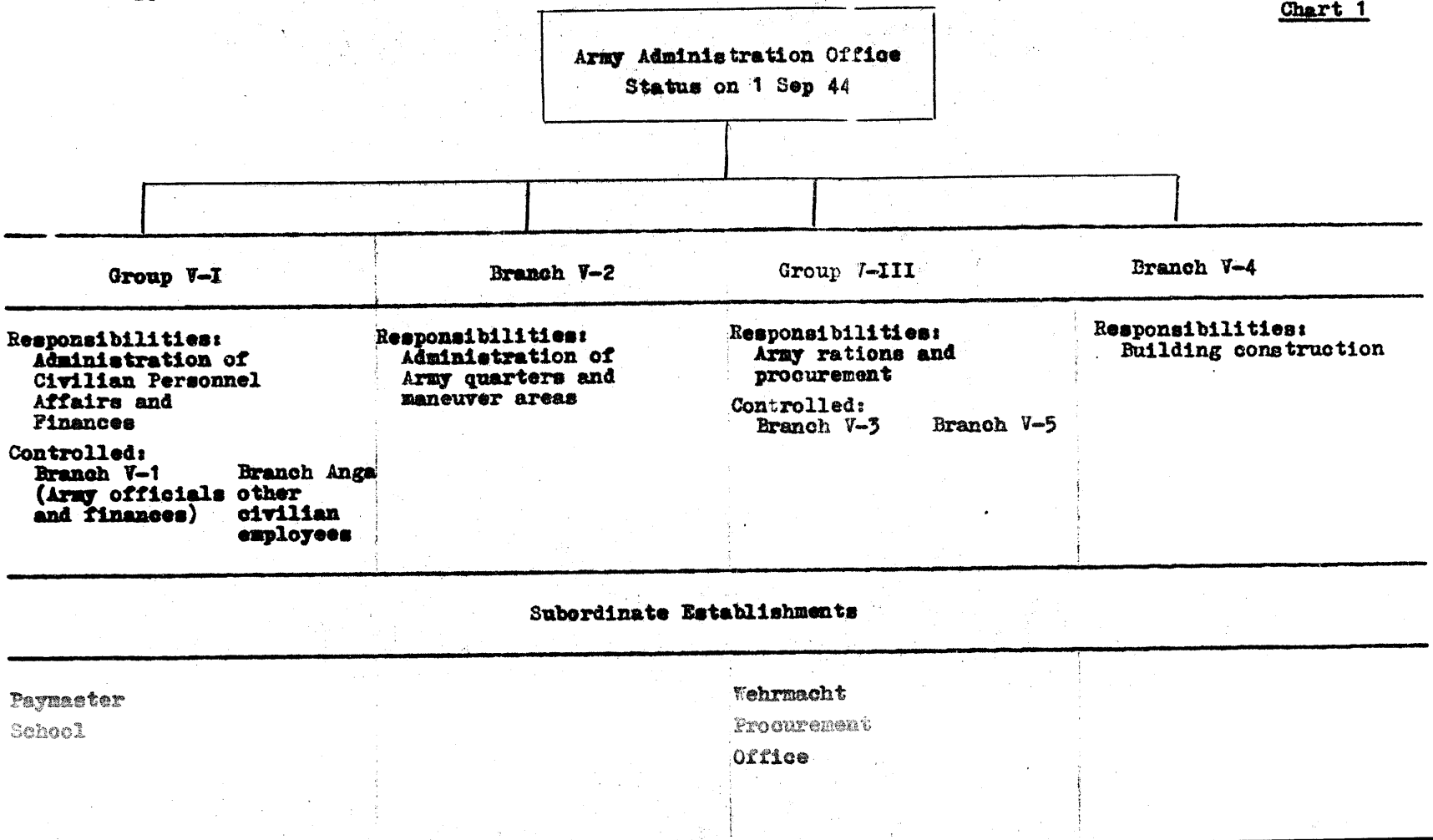
Branch V-4 (Administration of army construction).

Branch V-5 (Procurement Branch).

The items in parentheses give a rough idea of the functions of the executive staff and the groups and branches. However, the information they give is not specific enough and has often proved misleading, for which reason this matter will be dealt with more fully later on in this manuscript.

Command authority was vested in the Commander of the Replacement Training Army, whom the Army Administration Office served as an executive office. The Chief of the Army Administration Office had authority only over the personnel in his office and in the immediately subordinate installations, such as the Army Advanced Administration School and the Finance School. For this reason, all directives, instructions and orders were issued through regular military channels (chart 2, page 6) and signed "By Order of the Commander of the Replacement Training Army". Correspondence was

Chart 1


Army Administration Office
Status on 1 Sep 44
Group V-I
Responsibilities:
Administration of Civilian Personnel Affairs and Finances
Controlled:
Branch V-1 (Army officials and finances)
Branch Anga other civilian employees
Branch V-2
Responsibilities:
Administration of Army quarters and maneuver areas
Group V-III
Responsibilities:
Army rations and procurement
Controlled:
Branch V-3
Branch V-5
Branch V-4
Responsibilities:
Building construction
Subordinate Establishments
Paymaster School
Wehrmacht Procurement Office

written on forms with the heading "Army High Command" or "Wehrmacht High Command" according to which command was responsible for the matter involved, and the sub-heading "Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army". The unit commanders and office chiefs concerned were alone responsible for putting the directives, orders and instructions into effect. The only exception to this rule was that the Army Administration Office could issue direct instructions in matters of an internal administrative nature. The fields involved were clearly defined by the Army Regulations Bulletin* and included such matters as the supervision of cash accounting, the storing of supplies, refrigeration of foods.

The organization of the Office, as described above, was based on the peacetime organization and had been retained without any essential changes at the beginning of the war. However, it failed to meet the requirements of war so that it inevitably had to be adapted to the changing circumstances. The logically necessary changes were made with reluctance, since every change entailed an expansion and a correspondingly increased staff, and personnel, particularly trained personnel, were difficult to obtain.

No provision had been made during peacetime for the increased wartime burden of administration and it must be admitted that a complete, logical and firmly established organization did not exist at the beginning of the war. The process of development continued throughout the war and had not reached the final stage when the war ended.

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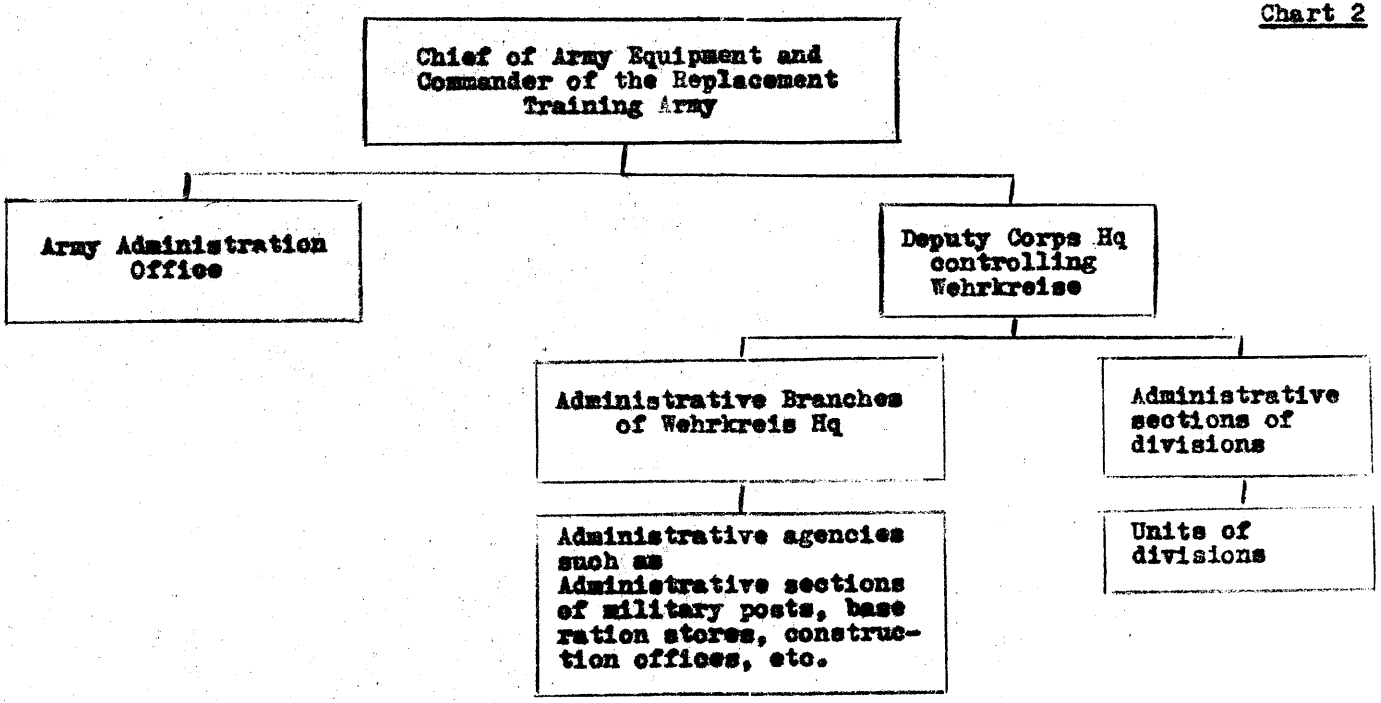
* Heeresverordnungsblatt.

Chart 2



Legend:

—— tactical chain of command

—— administrative chain of command

2. Changes During the War (chart 3, page 8, status in mid-1944).

In the autumn of 1944, when the author was transferred from the Office, the Army Administration Office was organized as follows:

Executive Staff (Chief of the Army Administration Office, one special staff officer, one adjutant, one organization officer).

Group V-I, consisting of

Branch V-1 (army officials - excluding chaplains, pharmacists and officials of the Judge Advocate Branch)

Branch V-8 (other civilian employees' affairs)

Branch V-9 (finance and accounting)

Organization Group

Basic and Advanced Administration Training Group

Group V-II, consisting of

Branch V-2 (Army Quarters Branch)

Branch V-6 (Maneuver Areas and Real Estate Branch)

Branch V-10 (administration of Army-owned forest and hunting areas).

Art Branch (decoration of recreation centers and quarters)

Group V-III, consisting of

Branch V-III-A (army rations, animal feeds, post exchange supplies)

Branch V-III-B (research: storage, packing and preparation of food)

Group V-IV, consisting of

Branch V-4 (Construction and Maintenance Administration Branch)

Branch V-7 (Construction, Materials and Labor Procurement Branch).

Group V-S, consisting of

Section I (general procurement problems -- textiles and leather)

Section II (raw materials -- textiles and leather)

Chart 3

Status mid-1944

Army Administration Office

Executive Staff

Group V-I	Group V-II	Group V-III	Group V-IV	Branch 5
Responsibilities: Administration, organization, basic and advanced training of civilian personnel; Finances, auditing and accounting	**Responsibilities:** Administration of army quarters, maneuver areas, real estate; Forest and hunting areas; Interior decoration	**Responsibilities:** Rations for men and animals; conservation, packing, preparation, research	**Responsibilities:** Army construction; Army construction activities	**Responsibilities:** Administration of textile and leather raw materials; procurement of cloth, finished woollen, cotton, synthetic articles and leather.
Subordinate Agencies				
Advanced Administration College; Paymaster School		Food Conservation and Packing Research Institute; Food Service Science Institute		Wehrmacht Procurement Office

Section III (procurement of cloth, finished woollen products, cotton, synthetic textiles, leather, and so forth).

Shortly before the author's transfer from the Office in the autumn of 1944, the Army Budget and Finance Group, until then directly responsible to the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army was placed under the Army Administration Office. This group did not attain any position of importance while the writer was in office.

IV. COMMENTS ON THE ORGANIZATION AS IT EXISTED IN LATE 1944

The organization had evolved gradually under the stress of wartime conditions. Existing difficulties were aggravated by shortages in personnel and materials which often had very serious effects and slowed down work in many ways. This subject will be treated more fully in the discussion of the individual branches. On the whole, however, the organization proved appropriate.

The lack of a chief of Wehrmacht administration was a weakness and resulted naturally in obstructionism, controversies concerning fields of authority, delays and inadequate orientation.

The solution sought by shifting responsibility to that branch of the Wehrmacht which was chiefly concerned in any specific matter was a makeshift with natural disadvantages which were plainly evident throughout the war. A chief of Wehrmacht administration should have been appointed at the outbreak of war. His office would have had to assume sole responsibility for representing the interest of the entire Wehrmacht in all dealings with the various governmental departments and would have had to strike a

balance between the interests of the individual branches of the Wehrmacht.

On the whole, cooperation with the offices of the Army Chief Supply and Administration Officer functioned smoothly after some initial difficulties.

The Army Administration Office was not adequately informed on the intentions of the High Command during the war and what information it did receive invariably came too late. An administrative service must be able to plan and work in advance; impromptu measures are of doubtful value and should be avoided whenever possible.

Cooperation with civil authorities suffered from the above-mentioned inadequate orientation and because of the large number of authorities concerned. The latter factor made it necessary to negotiate with a number of offices about one and the same matter, with a consequent waste of time. Because of their varying functions, these offices quite frequently worked at variance without even knowing of each others' existences. With the mounting shortage of personnel and materials during the war, the adverse effects of these weaknesses became more and more serious.

CHAPTER 2

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ARMY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

I. BACKGROUND

After World War I, an Army official was appointed as chief of the Office. However, owing to the fact that general conscription had been abolished in Germany, more and more of the officials moving into higher level positions -- in most cases former lawyers and other professional men -- were men who had not served in the armed forces because of the lack of universal con-

scription and therefore had no idea of the interests and needs of soldiers. The Army High Command therefore decided, in about 1951, to appoint as chief of the Office an officer who would be able to maintain the necessary contact with the troops.

From the date on which the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army was appointed at the beginning of the war, the chief of the Army Administration Office was subordinate to him. The chief represented his office in relations with superior headquarters and outside agencies, supervised inter-office cooperation as well as cooperation between the groups of his office and outside agencies, and decided any differences of opinion that arose. The branch or groups chiefs, as specialist officials, were the responsible heads of the branches or groups under them.

II. THE PROCUREMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

1. Responsible Group. Group V-1 (chart 4, page 13) handled the procurement of civilian personnel for the administrative services of the army through its Training Section and its Branch V-1 (army officials) and Branch V-2* (civilian employees).

Apart from its other pre-war responsibilities, the group kept under observation the private and service circumstances of all army officials, both those in service and those retired subject to recall, with the exception of apothecaries and officials of the Judge Advocate and Chaplain Branches, whose affairs were handled by the General Army Office. Furthermore, the Group dealt with all problems concerning civil service privileges, complaints, the maintenance of discipline among civilian employees, and so forth.

* Referred to as Branch Angs (abbreviation of "Angestellte und Arbeiter" — "Civilian Employees and Workers") on page 4 and in chart 1.

During the war, the Group assumed additional responsibilities. These included the assignment of civilian officials to administrative positions in the Field Army; the expansion of the "Corps of Army Administrative Officials" by absorption of the wartime temporary officials; the definition of the duties and disciplinary status of Army officials serving as staff administrative officials on higher level command staffs in contrast with the duties and status of non-officials performing the duties of officials; the transfer of certain categories of officials (paymasters and staff administration officials) to "specialized services" officer status; the introduction of woman auxiliaries.

2. Organization and Operating Procedures. The body of civilian officials of the army administrative service cannot be considered a homogeneous corps such as an officer corps. Personnel were drawn as the situation required from civilian professions or from the ranks of retired military personnel and employed in various careers as army officials. This resulted in a large number of diverse and unrelated careers, which cannot be compared one with another. The lack of uniformity was caused by the Civil Service Salaries Act*. To illustrate how widely the numerous careers varied, a few of them are being cited here together with the numbers under which they were listed:

(1)** Staff Administration; (2) Paymaster Service; (3) Government Grades; (9) Chief Clerks; (8) Secretaries; (17) Message Service; (18) Machine Operation; (5) Administration; (4) Building Construction; (7) Supply Administration; (6) Specialist School Personnel; (10) Administration of Camps; (11) Army Baking; (12) Army Tailoring;

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* Reichsbesoldungsgesetz.

** The figures in parentheses denote the number of the career on the official list of careers.

Chart 4

Status mid-1944

Group V-I

Branch V-1	Branch V-8	Branch V-9	Organizational Sub-Section	Training Branch
Responsibilities: Administration of army administrative officials *, excluding those employed in the legal and chaplain services and apothecaries. * Civilian employees with civil service status.	**Responsibilities:** Administration of civilian employees *. * Other than officials	**Responsibilities:** Finances Accounting	**Responsibilities:** Organizational problems of the administrative services. This sub-section operated independently. In late 1944 it was included in the Executive Staff.	**Responsibilities:** Basic and advanced training of army administrative officials.
Attached and Subordinate Agencies				
		Attached: Cashier's Office and Pay and Allowances Departments I-IV of the Army High Command		Subordinate: Paymaster School; Advanced Administration College

(13) Army Saddlery; (17) Caserne Administration; (15) Farrier Service; (14) Army Butchers; (16) Hospital Personnel.

Different categories existed even within the careers according to the level of education of the personnel involved and the duties to which they were assigned. Thus, staff administration officials were recruited primarily from among lawyers and to a lesser degree from among former officers, paymasters from among civilians who had passed a paymaster examination and, preferably, among former professional soldiers. The latter preference was due to the legal obligation to provide civil service employment for retired professional NCOs, for all of whom positions had to be reserved in the Wehrmacht.

Further subdivisions also developed in such specialized fields as food rationing, quarters administration, auditing, clothing and led to careers within careers. A profusion of titles, pay brackets, grades and office designations was the result.

This confused situation was intolerable in war. It had to be regulated and reorganized, and the Army Administration Office set about doing so soon after the outbreak of war. Frequent former attempts had failed, and because of the requirements of war it was necessary now to proceed slowly and with caution in order not to disrupt the services.

The personnel chiefly involved were those in the staff administration and paymasters services. Their dubious status between that of a civil servant and that of an officer, the lack of clarity in respect to their command authority and their subordination, and the ambiguity of their legal position in the execution of their duties had become unbearable in war. After a protracted study of the problem, a remedy was found in the

creation of the "Specialised Services Officer"* category, which initially included medical and veterinary officers, engineering officers, staff administration officers, paymasters, officials of the Judge Advocate Branch and similar categories of civilian officials, namely, those who came into immediate contact with troops in the performance of their "special" duties. They were granted the legal status, the command authority and the privileges of officers. Their uniforms and insignia of rank were similar to those of regular officers, with alterations which clearly revealed their specialised fields. Thus, the staff administration officials and the paymaster officials became "Officers of the Army Administrative Service". At the same time these two careers were coordinated and made inter-dependant.

This new arrangement, which was also introduced in the Luftwaffe and the Navy, had not come into full effect by 1944 and did not prove entirely satisfactory. The legal status of the officials concerned was regulated by the Civil Service Act**, by the terms of which the officials themselves were also bound, and this fact introduced certain difficulties. Thus, the staff administration officials and the paymaster officials were civil servants according to the Act but in many cases had to be granted military command authority, as in the case of division administrative officials, who had to have command authority over baker companies and butcher platoons. This led to numerous unsatisfactory circumstances. Another point which deserves mention is the fact that, in contrast with members of the officer corps, personnel from a government department -- a Ministerialrat*** for instance -- could not be transferred from a ministry to a lower level

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* Offizier im Sonderdienst.
** Beamtengesetz.
*** A counsellor in the third ministerial grade.

office without their personal consent unless they had violated a law.

What has been said above should suffice to illustrate how extremely difficult the administration of civilian personnel was.

Before the war, the procedure followed in furnishing administrative personnel for the army was that Branch V-1 appointed personnel to the more important positions in agreement with the administrative or command agencies or unit commanders concerned, while the less important positions were taken care of by the chief administrative official of the Wehrkreis* headquarters concerned. Exceptions were possible.

This arrangement remained unchanged during the war within the areas under the jurisdiction of the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army although a greater measure of responsibility was delegated to the offices under him.

For the Field Army, a certain number of officials in the lower and intermediate grades were allocated to the Chief Administrative Official, who was attached to the Chief Supply and Administration Officer and was the highest civilian administrative official in the Field Army, for employment at his discretion. Officials in the higher ranks continued to be appointed by mutual agreement.

The number of officials in the service in peace was by no means sufficient to meet the requirements of war. The following measures were therefore introduced:

a. Retired army personnel, civil servants and personnel from civilian professions were trained during peace for the staff administration

* The basic military area of Germany; in many respects similar to the pre-war corps areas in the USA.

and paymaster services as "Army Reserve Officials". The number involved was very small and training was still in the initial stages at the beginning of the war.

b. At the beginning of the war, reserve officers who had any specialized knowledge of administrative work were assigned to the army administrative services.

c. Specialists from civilian professions were given temporary status as army administrative officials for the duration of the war. They wore a distinctive uniform and their employment was restricted to specific fields.

d. During the war, personnel from the field forces, usually disabled men, were trained in a paymaster school and a college for advanced staff administration. Army officials already in the administrative services also received advanced training in these schools.

However, it still remained extremely difficult to obtain sufficient personnel and the situation was further aggravated by the fact that younger officials who were fit for active service were constantly being called up for service in combat units.

In an attempt to release still more soldiers and civilian employees for service as combatants, a headquarters auxiliaries corps was organized in which a considerable number of women were enrolled. The majority of them were employed as typists, recorders, telephone operators and general office personnel. They wore distinctive uniforms, were subject to special regulations, were paid according to their employment and the provisions of legal or special tariffs and, wherever possible, were billeted in

special homes.

Attention must be drawn here to what has been said in item c, above, concerning "Army Administrative Officials for the Duration of the War" in order to rectify a widespread misunderstanding. Army administration* should not be confused with the military government administration**. The two were completely separate organizations which cannot be compared with one another. The army administration supplied the troops and ministered to their needs and was responsible for the administration of army property. It was an organization set up and in full operation during peacetime. Army administration matters were handled by the Army Administration Office as an agency of the Army High Command.

The military government administration service, on the other hand, was a wartime organization for the administration of occupied territories. Its personnel were drawn from the civil service and from civilian professions as the need arose and retained their grades and the promotion schedules to which they were entitled in their normal professions. They wore a distinctive military uniform, had their own rank insignia and held no positions that could be compared with those of the army administration officials. All matters connected with military government administration, including the selection of personnel and the assignment of duties, were handled by the Army High Command through the Chief Supply and Administration Officer in a branch established specifically for this purpose. The only contact which the Army Administration Office had with personnel of the military government administration was in connection with their status as

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* Heeresverwaltung.
** Militärverwaltung.

civil servants (Beamten), since the Office handled all civil service matters for the Army.

The confusing situation which arose at the beginning of the war was due to the careless use of the term "Kriegsverwaltungsbeamter". To clarify the situation, the Army Administration Office obtained a ruling that personnel of the military government administration service were to use the title "Militaerverwaltungsbeamter"**, while personnel of the army administration were to be called "Kriegsverwaltungsbeamten".

III. FINANCES.

1. Responsible Group. Group V-I handled the financial affairs of the army through its Branch V-2 and from 1944 on through the Army Budget and Finance Branch.

The following is a list of the various agencies which handled funds prior to the war:

Group or Branch	Matters handled
Branch V-1*** (army officials and finances)	Army pay offices and other army disbursing agencies.
Army Affairs Branch (later Miscellaneous Branch of the General Army Office) jointly with the Army Budget Branch	Salaries for army officials. Pay for military personnel. Accounting and Auditing.
Central Branch of the General Army Office	Travel and moving allowances.

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* Literally "War" or "Military" administrative official.

** Literally military administrative official but military government administrative official is a more suitable translation.

*** Subdivision of the Army Administration Office.

After the outbreak of war, financial affairs were handled in the Army Administration Office as follows:

Group or Branch	Matters handled
Group V-I with its Branch V-9 (Army disbursing agencies and accounting)	Army Pay and other army disbursing agencies.
	Salaries for army officials under peace tariffs.
	Accounting and auditing.
Army Budget Branch*	All matters affected by the Army Pay Act and the Wehrmacht Wartime Allowances Act.
Central Branch*	Travel and moving allowances.

For the Field Army, accounting and pay were handled by the Chief Administrative Official attached to the Chief Supply and Administrative Officer at Army High Command. With some exceptions, his orders and decisions in these matters were determined by the appropriate regulations issued by the Wehrmacht High Command and the Commander of the Replacement Training Army. These regulations were valid for the Field Army and for the Replacement Training Army.

In the autumn of 1944, the Central Branch and the Army Budget Branch -- the latter expanded to form the Army Budget and Finance Group -- were transferred to the Army Administration Office and worked together with Branch V-9.

2. Operating Procedures.

a. The national budget was broken down into appropriations for the various departments of government. The appropriation for the army was known as Appropriation V-III-A. Estimates for the individual appro-

* Directly responsible to the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army.

priations were forwarded to Reich Finance Minister for submission to the Reich Cabinet. When passed by the Cabinet, the estimates became legally effective.

b. The Administration of Funds. Prior to the war, funds were made available to the branches of the Wehrmacht as well as to all other government departments by the Reich Treasury in Berlin, which was controlled by the Reich Finance Minister. In order to effect all financial transactions by clearing house methods, the Reich Treasury maintained a banking account for each branch of the Wehrmacht at the Reichsbank in Berlin and transferred to this account the amount appropriated for the current fiscal year. In this way the Reich Treasury made use of the Reichsbank and its numerous branches all over Germany to make its payments. Where no branch of the Reichsbank existed, other local banks were used.

Each army post finance office or other army disbursing agency maintained a current account at the local branch of the Reichsbank or at some other local bank.

Out of the funds deposited by the Reich Treasury, the branches of the Reichsbank made payments for the account of the army. The Army Administration Office was responsible for all financial transactions within the army. The Office issued basic directives regulating all payments from funds, controlled the various types of army disbursing agencies and determined what sums these agencies could spend during a given period. This procedure enabled the Army Administration Office to enforce economical spending and made it unnecessary for the various agencies to have too large sums of cash on hand.

The main office of the Reichsbank issued monthly statements of receipts and expenditures, so that the three high commands, the Reich Budgeting Office and other offices could check the financial situation at any time.

During the war, the administration of funds remained fundamentally unchanged. The funds required for the first thirty days after mobilization had been estimated and transferred to the Reichsbank. The Army Administration Office remained responsible for the issue of basic directives regulating the financial transactions of the Field Army as well as those of the Replacement Training Army. In line with the directives of the Office, the Chief Administrative Official, as the highest administrative official in the Field Army, issued his own directives.

Orders which affected all three branches of the Wehrmacht were issued by the Wehrmacht Administration Branch in the Wehrmacht High Command, which directed the equitable distribution of funds to the three branches of the Wehrmacht in the communications zones in occupied or allied countries. This control was necessary because the amounts that could be made available depended on the financial position of the country concerned, the possibility of procuring foreign currencies, the possible threat of inflation, international agreements and other special circumstances.

All accounting in the Army was handled by the auditing departments in the Zone of Interior under instructions from Branch V-9, Group V-I of the Army Administration Office.

3. Comments. There was no logical reason for the administration of finances to be handled by a number of different agencies, as was the system

before the war. The system complicated the overall control of finances and was wasteful in time and personnel. The concentration of all agencies handling financial affairs under the Army Administration Office, which took place in 1944, was a logical step. It simplified matters, reduced personnel requirements and proved generally satisfactory. The operating procedures adopted in the administration of funds also proved satisfactory both in peace and in war.

No opinion can be stated on the period after the autumn of 1944, at which time the author was transferred from the Army Administration Office, as no records are available to him.

IV. ADMINISTRATION OF QUARTERS, REAL ESTATE, AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST LANDS

1. Responsible Group. Group V-II, which consisted of Branches V-2, V-6 and V-10 (Chart 5, page 28) was in charge of all Army quarters, real estate and agricultural and forest lands.

Within the Zone of Interior, the Group handled all matters concerning casernes and billets, such as rentals, furnishings and utensils, target ranges, expendable supplies, laundries, fuel, disinfection, decontamination and air raid protection.

For the Field Army, the Group handled expendable supplies, furnishings, utensils, fuel, lighting equipment and stoves for casernes and billets; tents; prefabricated barracks; office supplies.

Within the areas under the jurisdiction of the Commander of the Replacement Training Army, the Group was responsible for the administration of all army real estate.

2. Organization and Operating Procedures. Prior to the war, supplies

in the fields mentioned above were handled by the administrative branches of the various Wehrkreis headquarters through the army post administration agencies. During the war this procedure was not changed in the areas controlled by the Commander of the Replacement Training Army, but the requirements of the Field Army were an added responsibility. These requirements were handled by the Chief Administrative Official, who requisitioned the commodities required from the Army Administration Office. The delivery of supplies was handled by the various deputy corps headquarters* in line with Army Administration Office directives, the individual armies being assigned to the supply administration branches of specific Wehrkreise for this purpose. In the case of certain commodities, all requirements were obtained from only a few Wehrkreise or even only from one. This was the case when the producing and supply facilities for a certain commodity had always been concentrated in, or had been evacuated to, one or a few Wehrkreise. The Chief Supply and Administration Officer took delivery of supply trains as they were needed and directed them to the user agencies.

The procurement of prefabricated barracks, tents and stoves was particularly important. The chief difficulties encountered here were the small producing capacities of the industries concerned compared with the large requirements of the Field Army and of the Replacement Training Army and the increasing lack of personnel and materials of all kinds. Although the maximum use was made of producing capacities, current demands could not be met. Transportation also presented serious difficulties owing to the bulky nature of these articles and the declining capacities of the railroads.

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* When war broke out, the corps controlling a Wehrkreis took to the field. Its place was taken by a deputy corps headquarters (Stellvertretendes Generalkommando).

Because of the growing demands for timber, as many trees were felled at army training centers as possible. Only the trees required as terrain cover during maneuvers were left standing.

Army forest lands were administered at regional level by the army regional forest supervision offices and at locality level by the various army chief foresters and army local foresters.

Only army real estate under the jurisdiction of the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army was administered by the Real Estate Branch of the Army Administration Office. Each of the three branches of the Wehrmacht administered its own real estate separately and all the Wehrmacht Administration Branch did was to supervise the issue of directives in order to insure uniform administration, and control the allocation of terrain to the separate branches for new constructions.

Thus, each branch of the Wehrmacht maintained its own administrative offices for real estate, forests and construction, and had its own casernes, training grounds, testing and artillery ranges, officer billets and training installations, such as colleges, officer candidate training and other schools, all of which were available only to the Wehrmacht branch concerned. The Wehrmacht Administration had no authority, for instance, to allocate specific casernes to the Army or the Luftwaffe, nor could it decide to establish a field agency or military post. The high command of the branch of the Wehrmacht concerned decided alone where it would place its staffs or units.

Military installations serving all three branches of the Wehrmacht, such as Wehrmacht academies*, were administered by the Army.

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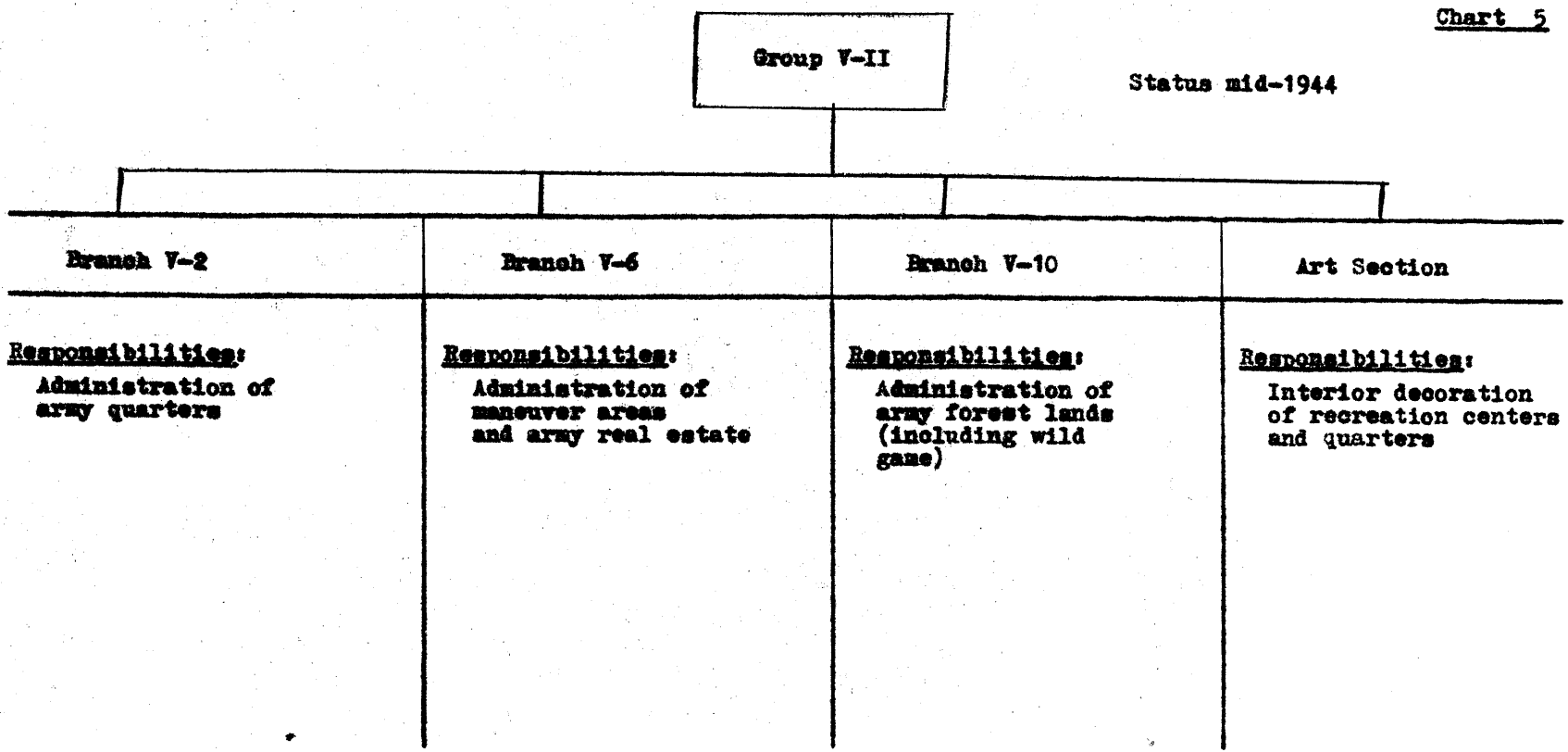
* Similar, in concept, to the US National War College.

Chart 5


Group V-II
Status mid-1944
Branch V-2
Responsibilities:
Administration of army quarters
Branch V-6
Responsibilities:
Administration of maneuver areas and army real estate
Branch V-10
Responsibilities:
Administration of army forest lands (including wild game)
Art Section
Responsibilities:
Interior decoration of recreation centers and quarters

Until 1940, real estate matters within the Army were handled by Branch V-2 (administration of quarters and training grounds) of the Army Administration Office. In 1940 this branch was expanded to form Group V-II (real estate and agricultural and forest lands) consisting of three branches, namely, Branch V-2 (garrison real estate and quarters), Branch V-6 (administration of maneuver areas) and Branch V-10 (army forest administration).

At regional level, real estate administration was supervised by the administrative branches of the Wehrkreis headquarters, at army post level by the administrative section of the army post concerned.

In 1942 a new branch, Branch U (Quarters and Troop Training Areas) was formed in the General Army Office. This branch was to determine the capacities of casernes and billets, decide which units were to use specific properties and supervise the construction, development and utilization of army installations. Cooperation between this branch and Group V-II of the Army Administration Office was very close since overlapping could not be avoided even through their respective responsibilities were more or less clearly defined.

5. Comments. The organization and operating procedures were simple and clear and proved satisfactory. In spite of the expansion which became necessary during the war, no basic changes were made in the peacetime organization.

V. RATIONS

1. Responsible Group. Up to 1938, Group V-III handled all basic problems connected with rationing. In 1938, when the Wehrmacht High Command was established, a Wehrmacht Administration Branch was formed and

assumed responsibility for the uniform control of rationing for all three branches of the Wehrmacht. Responsibility for the actual handling of rations was assigned to the Army High Command, which delegated this responsibility to the Army Administration Office, where the procurement and distribution of rations continued to be handled by Group V-III (chart 6, page 29).

During the war, the Group computed the number and types of rations needed and requisitioned the appropriate quantities of foodstuffs from the Reich Food Ministry. It was also responsible for the storage of rations and for allocations to the three branches of the Wehrmacht, and determined the points at which they were to be delivered. In addition, the Group supervised all army cooks and other kitchen personnel as well as the packing and refrigeration of foods, and was responsible for research and analysis and for the introduction of new ration items.

3. Organization and Operating Procedures. To perform its mission, Group V-III needed the cooperation of various civilian authorities, particularly of the Reich Food Ministry. On the basis of the estimates submitted by the Army, the Navy and the Luftwaffe, the Group informed the Ministry of the total amounts of food required and requested allocations. With due consideration for the requirements of other consumers and after discussing the general food situation in Germany with agencies of the National Food Agricultural Estate*, the Ministry examined the possibility of procuring the food required by the Wehrmacht.

After the Ministry had determined what amounts of food could be made available to the Wehrmacht, the Group proceeded to allocate these amounts

* Reichsnährstand. Established by law of 13 September 1933 to represent the corporate organization of producers and distributors of agricultural products (Editor).

to the Army, the Navy and the Luftwaffe. The procurement plan was worked out jointly by Group V-III, the Reich Food Ministry and the National Food Agricultural Estate.

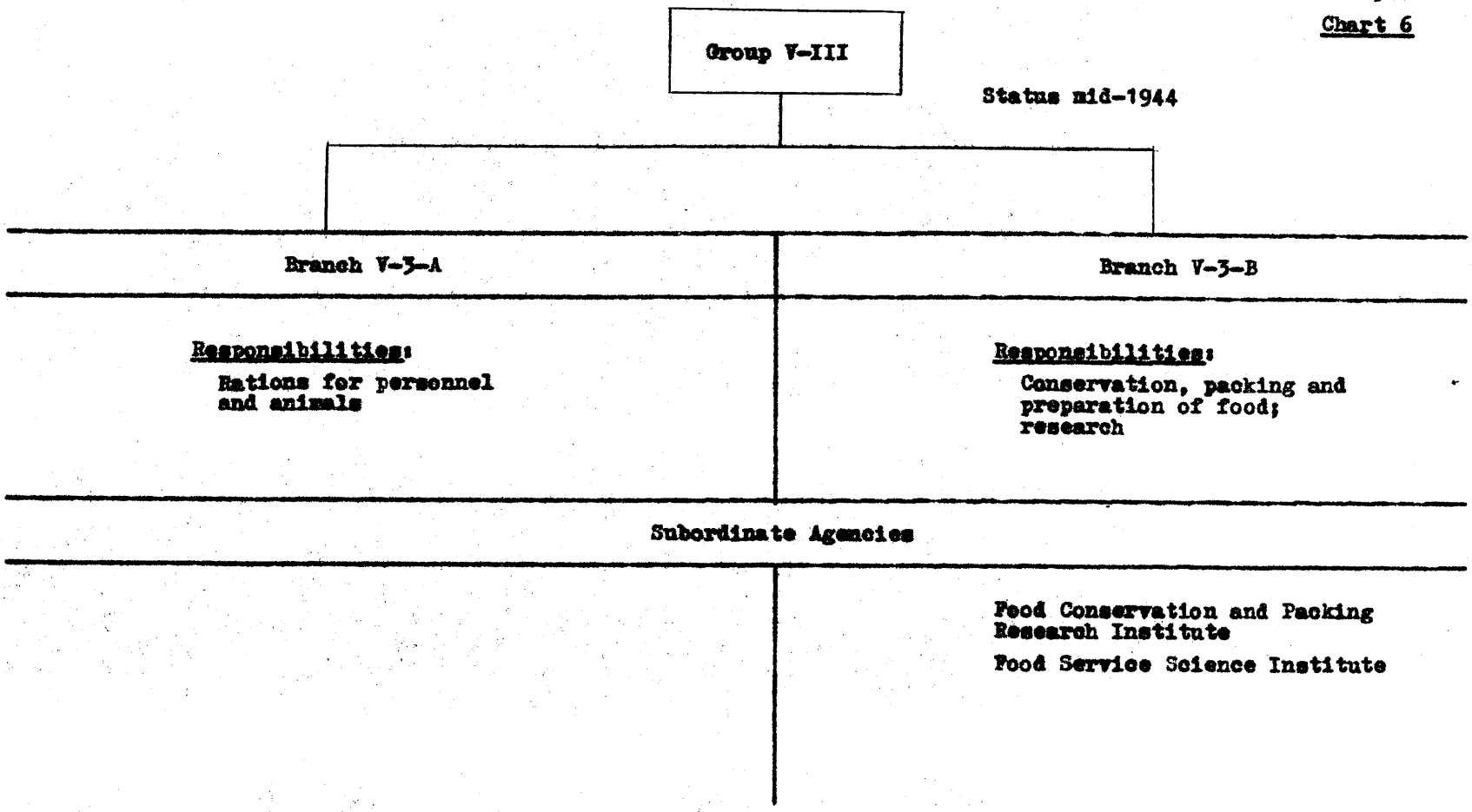
Since the Luftwaffe had no appropriate organization of its own at high level, it received its food rations directly through the Army Ration Branch. The Navy, on the other hand, maintained its own organization for the procurement of the food allocated to it. This was necessary because of the special requirements of the Navy's sea-going units.

The responsible agencies of the Army at regional level were the administrative branches of the various Wehrkreis headquarters, which controlled local agencies, such as the base ration stores and the main and other ration depots, as well as the administrative sections of the various army posts.

The regional and local agencies procured food in cooperation with the appropriate civilian authorities concerned, which included the agencies of the National Food Agricultural Estate and the local state food offices.

In the areas controlled by the Commander of the Replacement Training Army, this system of procurement was supervised by the various Wehrkreis headquarters. For units in the field, the agencies operating under the Wehrkreis headquarters loaded ration supply trains at the base ration stores in the Zone of Interior upon requisition by the Army Chief Administrative Official. The responsibility of the food ration agencies in the Zone of Interior ceased once the railroads had accepted delivery. The trains were routed by the Chief Administrative Official in consultation with the Army Chief of Transportation.

Chart 6


Group V-III
Status mid-1944
Branch V-3-A
Branch V-3-B
Responsibilities:
Rations for personnel and animals
Responsibilities:
Conservation, packing and preparation of food; research
Subordinate Agencies
Food Conservation and Packing Research Institute
Food Service Science Institute

In order to obtain at least some measure of control over the final issue of rations, the Army Administration Office in 1941 suggested the appointment of a rations inspector. The plan was rejected initially by the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army, who considered the final distribution of rations to be the sole responsibility of unit commanders. An inspector was finally appointed in the autumn of 1942, but he was given no command authority and his responsibility was restricted to the inspection of depots in the Zone of Interior in order to insure that food stocks were properly stored. This measure did not achieve the purpose intended by the Army Administration Office.

In occupied territories, the procurement procedures were as follows:

In the East, the economic exploitation of the occupied territories was a joint responsibility of the National Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territory* and the Field Economic Staff of the Wehrmacht High Command** with their various field agencies. Through its field agencies, the Field Economic Staff of the Wehrmacht High Command controlled all available food supplies on behalf of the Wehrmacht.

In other occupied territories, the responsibility for economic exploitation rested with the military government agencies, which allocated food to the Wehrmacht in accordance with instructions from the Reich Food Ministry. The allocated quantities of food were procured by field agencies of the army in accordance with instructions issued by the Chief Army Administrative Official in consultation with Group V-III. The procurement instructions were forwarded to the administrative officials at army group

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* Ministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete.

** Feldwirtschaftsstab des OKW.

and army headquarters or to the appropriate regional administrative officials, such as the administrative officials attached to the military commanders of occupied territories or the commanders of communications zones.

The Wehrmacht Administration Branch supported the procurement program during the war through cooperation with the Office of the Four Year Plan* and with the Foreign Office as well as by securing foreign currencies to purchase food supplies abroad.

In March 1945, Hitler ordered SS-Obergruppenfuehrer** and General der Waffen-SS*** Frank, who had been chief of the Army Administration Office since the autumn of 1944, to establish a uniform basis for the supply of rations, clothing and personnel equipment to the entire Wehrmacht as well as the Waffen-SS, the police forces, the Reich Labor Service, the Organisation Todt**** and the German Red Cross.

The grouping of functions within the two branches, Branch V-III-A and Branch V-III-B, of Group V-III is shown in chart 7, page 33 and chart 8, page 34), but a few details now follow on the main fields involved.

3. Branch V-III-A. This branch handled the procurement of rations for humans and animals, and administered the stocks held in the base ration stores. In times of peace, when sufficient food was available in the country or could be imported, procurement was merely a question of proper

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* Amt Vierjahresplan.

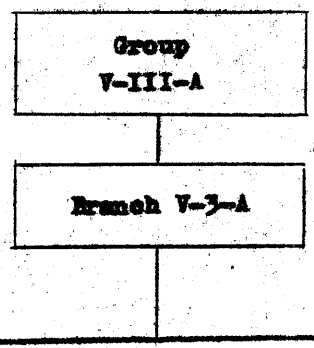
** Rank designation used in the political or general SS and equivalent to the military rank of lieutenant general.

*** Lieutenant general.

**** A paramilitary construction organization of the National Socialist Party, auxiliary to the Wehrmacht.

Chart 7

Status mid-1944



Procurement of food (excluding bread), wine, spirits, tobacco allocated to the Wehrmacht by the appropriate civilian departments of government.

Administration of stocks in base ration stores.

Procurement of bread and bread cereals, and feed for horses, dogs and pigeons allocated to the Wehrmacht by the Reich Food Ministry

Procurement of post exchange stocks, with the assistance of the appropriate civilian authorities.

Administration of stocks in base ration stores.

Loading of supply trains (rations and post exchange articles), as requisitioned by the Chief Administrative Officer of the Field Army, at the base ration stores.

Documentation of supply trains and delivery to railroads. (The trains were routed by the Army Chief of Transportation in consultation with the Chief Supply and Administration Officer).

Chart 8

Status mid-1944

Group V-III

Branch V-3-B

Inspection of food to determine nutritional and hunger-satisfying properties, palatability, keeping qualities and transportability. Kitchen problems, including the operations of training kitchens, training staffs, training of food experts, introduction of new ration items. Food conservation and packing. Emergency rations. Preserved rations for animals.	Computation of caloric values. Production problems concerning new types of food. Monthly menus. Inspection and analysis of food.	Domestic committee. Expert advice in all food problems and on ingredients required in the preparation of foods.

Subordinate Agencies

Food Service Science Institute (trained cooking personnel and experiments with new types of food) Food Conservation and Packing Research Institute		

organisation and the proper use of funds provided for the purchase of food supplies. With the introduction of civilian food rationing and the growing shortage of supplies during the war, procurement became a problem of "organizing the shortage". Quantitative procurement was concentrated in an ever-increasing measure under the Reich Food Ministry and it became necessary to give serious thought to the types of food available at any given time. This resulted inevitably in ceaseless negotiations with the Reich Food Ministry, while the substitution of one type of food for another that was in short supply at any given time made repeated computations of caloric values necessary and led to a constant juggling to compile rations with sufficient hunger satisfying properties and an adequate vitamin content. It also became necessary to compile a sliding ration scale, both for humans and for animals, according to the required work performances, and this scale had to be revised again and again. This is known to be a task that can never be finally completed, a problem that can never be solved accurately and to the satisfaction of all concerned, and this is particularly true under circumstances which rarely permit an increase of rations but frequently necessitate further reduction of the already meager allowance. Long-range planning becomes impossible when supplies are shrinking while the numbers to be fed increase by leaps and bounds. Improvisation or day-by-day planning, possible in many other fields, fails here because of the compelling necessity to provide food three times daily for humans and animals alike, no matter whether the unit concerned is in combat or is resting in the rear.

Even plans prepared with the utmost care and foresight are subject

to dislocation by the unforeseeable effects of crop failures; air raids against traffic channels, storehouses and producing installations; natural or intentionally caused deterioration and, last but not least, by the packing difficulties which arise when a war is being waged in regions with so widely differing climatic conditions as those of France and Russia or northern Europe and northern Africa.

Post exchange supplies are a most important factor in the maintenance of proper hygiene and good morale. This applies to necessities such as toothpastes, toothbrushes, razor blades and the like as well as to luxury items, such as wine, spirits and tobacco. In the Zone of Interior, where all units were under the jurisdiction of the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army, the unit post exchanges purchased most of their supplies within the country in accordance with existing regulations. For the Field Army, post exchange supplies were forwarded on special trains as requisitioned by the Chief Administrative Official, who also handled the further distribution of such supplies. Requirements were estimated on the basis of experience and were requisitioned from the civilian agencies concerned. Here again, the constantly growing shortage, the air threat to transportation facilities and the general insecurity of transportation routes in occupied territories seriously affected the flow of supplies.

4. Branch V-III-B. Group V-III was not designed for the handling of such gigantic tasks as developed during World War II, so that an expansion of the existing peacetime branch was not sufficient to cope with the situation. A new branch, Branch V-III-B had to be created during the war to handle new problems as they arose.

The main problems handled by Branch V-III-E were the following:

a. Food Research, Testing, Introduction of New Ration Items. If a shortage in any certain item could not be remedied through imports, the supplies that were available had to be used in combination with other types of food in order to insure more economical use. Here, the chief responsibility of Branch V-III-E was to insure that the change was made without reducing the quality of the ration.

There were only three articles of food in which Germany herself produced an adequate supply, namely, rye, sugar and potatoes. The use of these foods in combination with other types of food was a serious problem. The palatability, hunger satisfying properties, nutritive value, transportability and keeping qualities of all new combinations had to be ascertained. In addition, many food combinations used in peacetime had to be tested during the war, since military requirements often differed from the normal civilian requirements.

Ration items for troops at the front also had to be examined to decide the best form in which they should be supplied, whether fresh, pulverized, frozen, dried and pressed or as normal preserves. Consideration had to be given to the climatic conditions in the various theaters of operations and to the intended use of the food item (for use in emergency rations, for air-drop supply and so forth).

A surprisingly large number of new food items made their appearance during the war, such as rye soups, "Bratling"* powder, powdered soy bean sprouts and edible fats from coal.

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* A type of savory largely used to replace meat, particularly in meat balls and gravies.

b. The Optimum Utilization of All Food Items. In preparing food, it is essential that meals should not only be nourishing and appetizing but also that they provide nutrition in an easily digestible form. Proper cooking is therefore just as important as procurement and supply. It must be borne in mind that there is a great difference between cooking for a family consisting of a few individuals and cooking centrally for large numbers. Cooks who were trained for mass feeding were not available in sufficient numbers to meet wartime requirements so that it was necessary to train additional men in the Replacement Training Army, in unit kitchens and in special training kitchens operated by the various Wehrkreis headquarters. At the same time, special training teams were organized to improve the training of the trained cooks serving in field units. In addition, the Field Army published "The Field Kitchen", a paper to which the troops contributed articles, and a research institute constantly tested and improved the methods employed in large-scale cooking. Units maintained herb gardens to offset the lack of exotic spices.

c. Proper Packing, Storage and Transportation of Foods. The problem of keeping food fresh required close study because of the enormous distances over which supplies had to be transported and the climatic conditions to which they would be exposed. Hardly any experience was available on this subject and little thought had been given to the problems involved.

The shortage of packing and canning materials, particularly tin, grew more and more acute. In spite of repeated requests, empties were rarely returned because the troops always had some use for them. It therefore became absolutely essential to establish an institute to examine all problems connected with the conservation and packing of foods.

d. Short Supply Problems. The constantly recurring necessity to devise means to cope with shortages in one item or another led to the establishment of a committee of food specialists which could be consulted on all matters concerning the preparation of foods and the ingredients required.

5. Comments. The organization and operating procedures of Group V-III proved satisfactory and no major changes became necessary. The failure to grant the ration inspector adequate powers, as requested by the Army Administration Office, proved a disadvantage.

V. BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

1. Responsible Group. Group V-IV handled all construction problems of the army (sketch 9, page 40) through its Branch V-4 (Construction and Maintenance Administration) and Branch V-7 (Construction Materials and Labor Procurement Branch). These problems included the construction and maintenance of casernes and other billeting facilities, food and ordnance storage installations, hospitals, heating and air raid protection installations and firing ranges. The Group was also responsible for the procurement of construction material, for the preparation of plans for more economical construction and for the construction of approach roads to army installations.

2. Organization and Operating Procedures. Construction was closely related to real estate problems. The peacetime organization within the Army Administration Office initially remained unchanged, but as the war progressed the destruction caused in air raids, the enlargement of the Replacement Training Army, and the difficult supply situation caused such an excessive amount of work that Branch V-4 had to be expanded to form Group V-IV, com-

Group V-IV

Status mid-1944

Construction and Maintenance Administration Branch	Construction Materials and Labor Procurement Branch
Responsibilities: Construction and maintenance of ration storing installations; hospitals; fire, gas and air raid protection facilities; emergency constructions. Construction of ordnance supply storage installations; prefabricated barracks. Preparation and distribution of plans for economical standardized structures. Road construction.	Responsibilities: Basic problems concerning construction materials. Procurement of labor.

prising Branches V-4 and V-7. However, no fundamental changes occurred in the internal organization. At Wehrkreis level, construction was handled by the appropriate sections of the administrative branches of the Wehrkreis headquarters concerned and by the army construction offices controlled by the administrative branches. The branches were allowed considerable latitude in this field and only fundamental matters pertaining to major new construction projects required the approval of the Army Administration Office.

To carry out their work, the Wehrkreis administrative branches received regular allocations of material. These allocations were made in accordance with the requisitions they submitted and the availability of materials. Special allocations were made for major projects. This centralized control was essential because of the growing shortage of construction materials, which made a just distribution necessary, and also because of the enormous requirements resulting from the constant growth of the army during the war and from the steadily increasing scale of destruction caused in the Zone of Interior by enemy air action.

Reserve supplies also had to be obtained for the Field Army and stored in special building depots at the disposal of the Chief Supply and Administration Officer.

The long duration of the war resulted in billeting difficulties for the Field Army, particularly in the East. Consequently, a special regulation was issued by Group V-IV in which simplification, economy and the use of substitute materials was called for in all constructions, from the smallest cabin to dwelling houses, recreation centers and hospitals. Particular stress was placed on economical standardized types of structures and to obtain this end, directives were issued and model drafts distributed.

The intention existed to establish construction yards at all army posts. These construction yards were to repair immediately all damage resulting from air raids. However, the plan could not be put into operation because of the lack of material and personnel.

3. Comments. The organization and operating procedures of Group V-IV proved satisfactory. No major changes were necessary during the war.

VII. TEXTILES, LEATHER, PERSONAL EQUIPMENT (EXCLUDING WEAPONS)

1. Responsible Branch. Group V-V (chart 10, page 43) handled the procurement and distribution of raw materials (textiles, leather, synthetic substitutes) and articles of personal equipment (belts, helmets, buttons and the like, but no weapons) allocated to the Wehrmacht by the Ministry of Economy.

In the autumn of 1944 the Branch was expanded to form Group V-V and made responsible for the procurement of office supplies as well as furnishings, utensils and expendable supplies for billets and hospitals, in addition to its former responsibilities.

2. Organization and Operating Procedures. No central agency existed in the Wehrmacht High Command for the joint procurement of clothing and equipment for all branches of the Wehrmacht. The Army Procurement Branch (Branch V-S) was responsible for the procurement and distribution of textile and leather raw materials for the entire Wehrmacht. Estimates of their requirements were submitted to the Branch by the Army, the Navy and the Luftwaffe. In negotiations with the Ministry of Economy, the Branch secured the necessary allocations and arranged the system of procurement.

Chart 10

Status 1 September 1939

Branch V-5

Procurement Policy Section	Textile and Leather Raw Materials Section	Procurement Section
Responsibilities: Procurement problems. Liaison with Navy and Luftwaffe and with other army agencies.	**Responsibilities:** Animal and synthetic raw materials for the production of textiles. Hides, skins, leather. (This section was responsible for the requirements of the entire Wehrmacht in the above lines)	**Responsibilities:** Cloth, finished woollen goods, cotton, synthetic silk, woollen, and leather articles. Technical problems concerning textiles. Control of prices. Instructions to Wehrmacht Procurement Office. Supervision.
Subordinate Agencies		
		Wehrmacht Procurement Branch

The factories which were to make deliveries were decided in discussions with the industrial control agencies.

Each branch of the Wehrmacht had its own clothing department within the Wehrmacht High Command; at regional level (Wehrkreis headquarters for the army, Luftgaukommandos* for the Luftwaffe and Naval Base Commands for the Navy), each branch had its own clothing office, workshops and storehouses.

Two courses were open to the branches of the Wehrmacht in securing their clothing and equipment requirements within the quota allocated to them. One course was to procure cloth, fittings and other semi-finished products for final manufacture in their own installations, the other was to procure the finished article.

A Wehrmacht Procurement Office had been created to simplify procurement. It was not an office of the Wehrmacht High Command in the real sense of the word but rather a central commercial agency to which the branches of the Wehrmacht sent their requisitions through Branch V-5. The office was then responsible for placing the production orders, for the supervision of proper workmanship and for delivery to the requisitioning agency in accordance with instructions from Branch V-5. As a lower level agency it was controlled by Branch V-5 of the Army Administration Office.

In the placing of government orders, the desires of the various districts of Germany were given due consideration. For this purpose, reports

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* Administrative and supply organization of the Luftwaffe. Its authority was limited to a clearly defined and permanently fixed geographical area. Luftgaue in Germany were designated by Roman numerals, those in occupied territories by their location.

were obtained through the Administrative Branch of the Ordnance Inspectorate. These reports were consolidated from reports by economic advisors, state governments, chambers of industry and commerce, labor offices, and so forth. Delivery to the individual branches of the Wehrmacht.

The procedure in the procurement of cloth, fittings and finished products was therefore as follows:

The clothing branches of the Army, Navy and Luftwaffe High Commands each prepared an estimate of what they would require within a certain period of time and reported the requirements to Branch V-5, specifying the types and quantities of each article within the raw material quota allocated to them. Branch V-5 then arranged with the Reich Ministry of Economy for the production.

Each branch of the Wehrmacht placed its orders for clothing and personal equipment with the Wehrmacht Procurement Office, which was responsible for proper workmanship in the production and for the delivery of the final product. A few items of clothing and personal equipment were manufactured by the branches of the Wehrmacht in their own clothing offices, which also served as local depots.

Since an army agency was responsible for the control of raw materials for textiles and personal equipment, no office existed at Wehrmacht High Command level with sufficient authority to decide priorities in the distribution of clothing and equipment. When it was necessary to give one branch of the Wehrmacht priority over another or if it became necessary to transfer clothing or equipment stocks from one branch to another, the decision had to be made by the Wehrmacht High Command in agreement with the commanders in chief of the branches concerned.

Within the army, responsibility for the procurement and distribution of clothing and personal equipment was separated in 1937. The procurement of raw materials remained a responsibility of the Army Administration Office but the Clothing Branch, which handled production and distribution, was transferred to the General Army Office.

After the end of 1943, the Clothing Branch of the General Army Office remained responsible for designing, planning and distribution, while the Clothing Branch of the Ordnance Inspectorate, to which the army clothing offices were now subordinate, was assigned the responsibility for the procurement of clothing and equipment.

This redistribution of the responsibilities of the Army Clothing Branch caused such difficulties that a final reorganization took place toward the end of 1944. The entire administration of army clothing and personal equipment was again centralized under the Raw Materials Procurement Branch within the Army Administration Office and the branch was expanded to form Group V-V (Clothing and Procurement Branch), where the responsibilities were grouped as shown in chart 11, page 80.

Distribution within the army was now handled as follows:

For the Field Army, clothing and personal equipment supplies were distributed on the basis of estimates submitted by the army groups and armies to the Chief Administrative Official. These estimates were forwarded to Group V-V in consolidated monthly or special reports by the Chief Administrative Official, who also finally directed the shipment of the allocated supplies to the clothing and equipment depots of the army groups and armies.

For the Replacement Training Army and for units of the Field Army stationed in the Zone of Interior, supplies were distributed on the basis

of reports from the various Wehrkreise.

3. Summary.

a. Wehrmacht High Command Controls. The lack of a fully empowered central procurement branch in the Wehrmacht High Command was not so serious in times of peace, but it proved disastrous during the war. Because of this lack, the responsible army office had to conduct lengthy and wearisome negotiations and had to appeal to the common sense of the offices involved in its efforts to settle the by no means infrequent disputes between the three Wehrmacht branches. If a pressing emergency or preparations for some special purpose made it necessary to change the usual distribution ratios, or if it became necessary to divert stocks originally for one branch to another branch of the Wehrmacht, the measure was so hotly contested that it assumed the proportions of a matter of state policy and frequently had to be decided by a personal order from Hitler. It is clearly evident that the waste of energy and the friction which resulted were bound to have a detrimental effect on the overall war effort.

b. Army High Command Level. It was unnecessary to transfer the Clothing Branch to the General Army Office, where it was so widely separated from Branch V-5, the Army Procurement Branch, of the Army Administration Office. This measure made the quick and expert handling of assignments difficult. The Army Administration Office had attempted repeatedly to simplify operations by placing the Clothing Branch and the Procurement Branch under one head, but this suggestion had not been approved by the superior authorities although it was conceded to be basically sound. The reason given for the refusal to permit this change had been that any

change in the organization would be impracticable during the war. That this argument was unsound is proved by the fact that a reorganization was subsequently ordered in 1943. However, the change that took place then made matters even worse than they had been since it divided the Clothing Branch of the Army Administration Office into a Clothing Branch of the Army General Office, which was responsible for designing, planning and distribution, and a Clothing Branch of the Ordnance Inspectorate, which was responsible for procurement and for the final manufacture of clothing in its clothing departments. Three separate branches now handled the procurement of clothing and personal equipment for the Wehrmacht, namely, Branch V-5 of the Army Administration Office with the Wehrmacht Procurement Office it controlled, the Clothing Branch of the General Army Office, and the Clothing Branch of the Ordnance Inspectorate with its clothing departments.

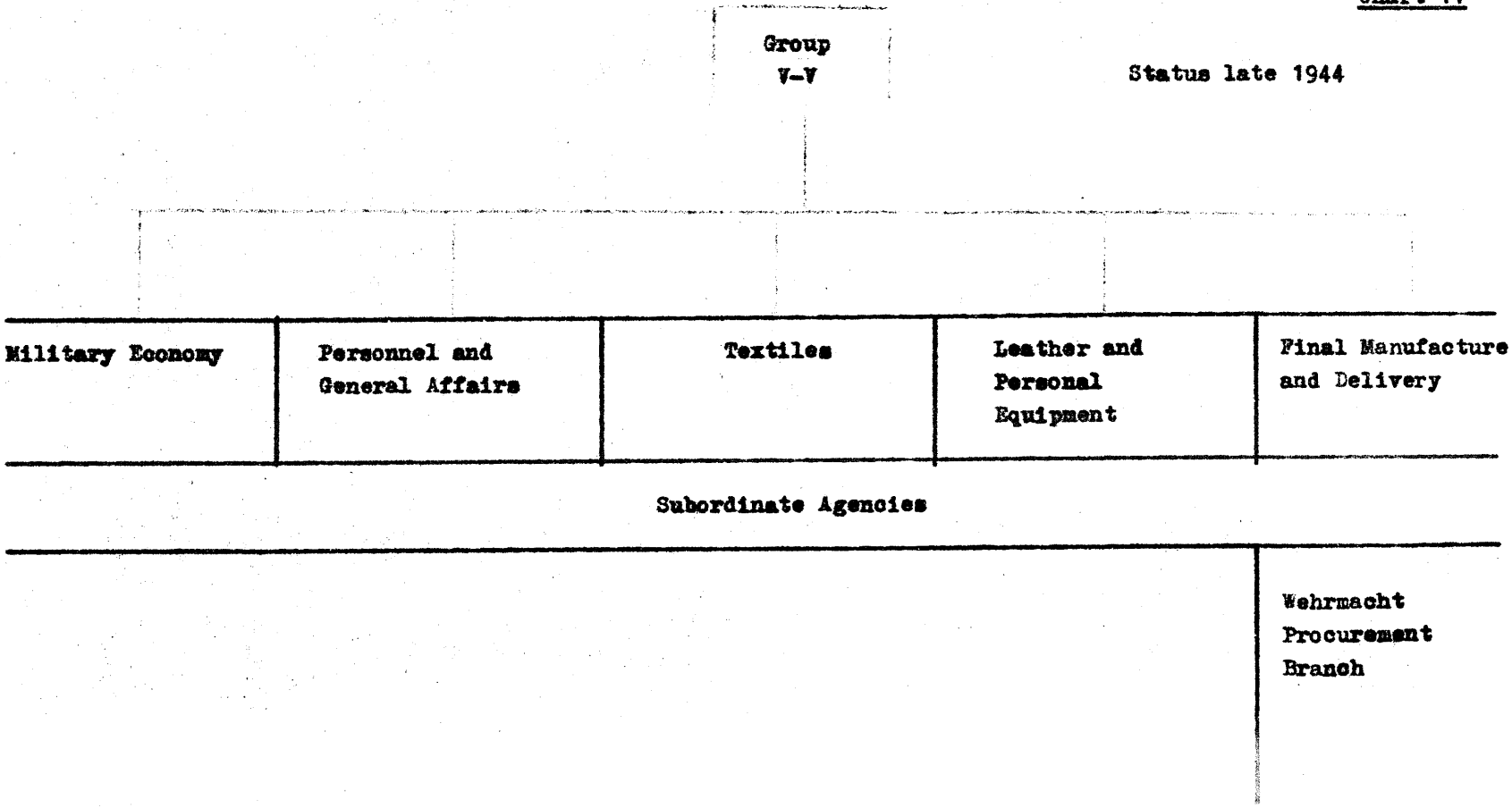
This division of responsibilities made overall control, planning and operating so difficult that a final reorganization became inevitable. This reorganization took place too late -- in 1944 -- and followed the lines suggested throughout the years by the Army Administration Office in that all procurement and administrative functions were combined under the Army Administration Office, where they were handled by Branch V-5, which was expanded to form Group V-V (Clothing and Procurement Group -- chart 11, page 50). Responsibility for construction affairs remained with the General Army Office in consultation with the Army Administration Office.

e. Standardization of Clothing and Personal Equipment. It was neither economically sound nor practical during peace for each of the branches of the Wehrmacht to have clothing and personal equipment which

differed substantially in color, cut and type of material from the clothing and equipment of the other branches. Such a difference was justifiable in the case of only a few articles when it was necessitated by the specific needs of an arm. In view of the shortages which were bound to develop during war, it was a definite mistake not to standardize clothing and equipment. The failure to do so seriously hampered and in some cases even prevented proper planning, control, production and final manufacture. Nevertheless, in spite of the organizational inadequacies, the troops were as well supplied in this field on the whole as could have been expected in view of the extreme shortages which developed during the war. This was due to the intelligent cooperation of all concerned.

The organization introduced in the army in 1944 was satisfactory in every respect. The prominent feature of this organization was that the control and direction of all activities connected with the procurement and distribution of clothing and personal equipment were centered under Group V-V of the Army Administration Office while the actual procurement, processing and delivery of these commodities was carried out by the Wehrmacht Procurement Office under the direction of Group V-V.

Chart 11


Group
V-V
Status late 1944
Military Economy
Personnel and General Affairs
Textiles
Leather and Personal Equipment
Final Manufacture and Delivery
Subordinate Agencies
Wehrmacht Procurement Branch